
THE RECOVERIE of Paradise.

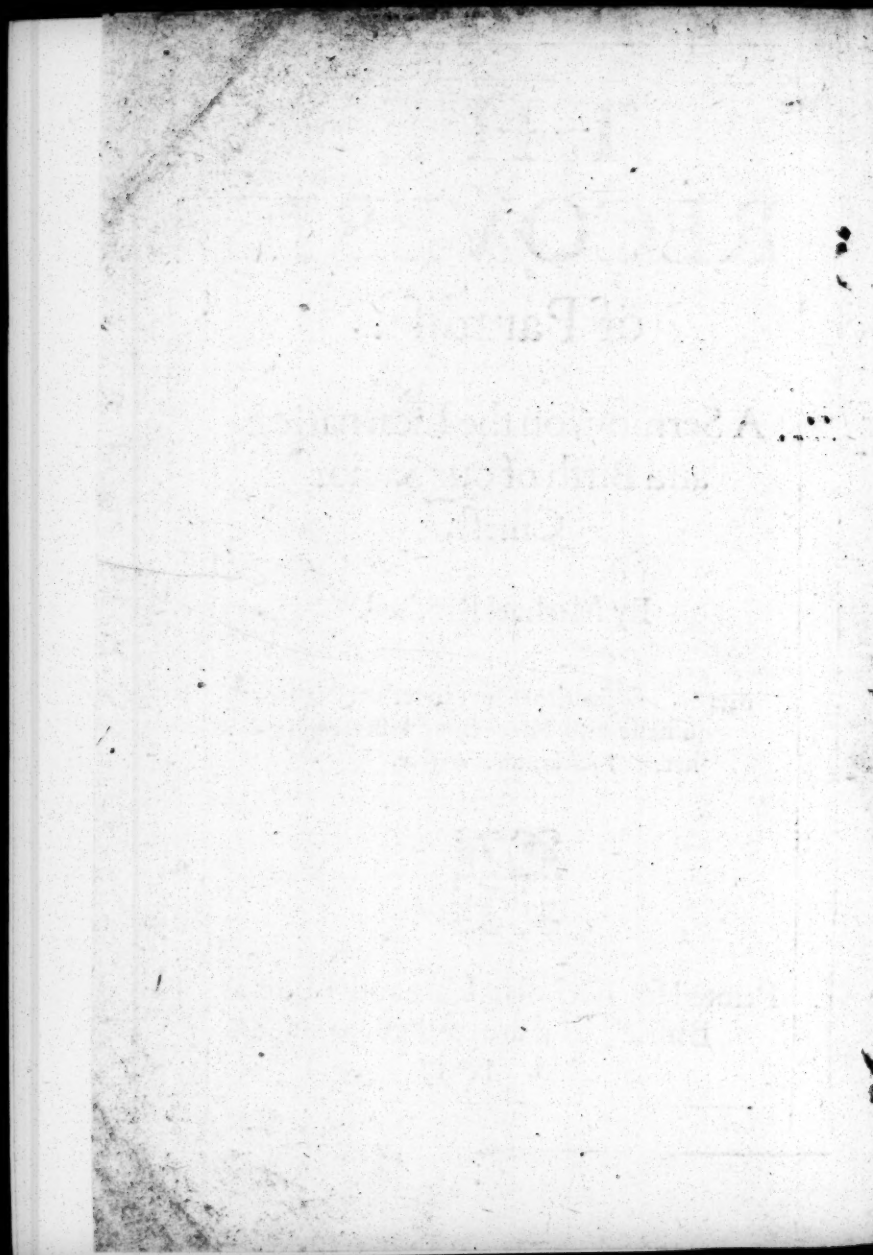
A Sermon, on the Incarnation
and Birth of our Sauior
Christ.

By Michael Birkhed.

Mercy and Truth are met together, Righte-
ousnesse and Peace haue kissed each o-
ther. *Pfal. lxxxv. verse x.*



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sold. 1602.



To the Right Honorable,
Sir Tho. Egerton Knight,
Lord Keeper of the great Seale of
England, and one of hir Maiesties
most Honorable Privy
Counsell.

IThath bin(Right Honorable)well de-
bated amongst the Learned, where
Learning was first professed, and it is as
truly recorded of many worthy Wri-
ters, who were the first that did teach
for to Write, and surely as our forefathers did reue-
rence them as Gods, which spake wisdom; so we
may extol them as men somewhat superior vnto men
which inuented the arte to Write what they spake.
The first benefitted the persons that heard them; by
the latter are instructed al posterities that shall reade
them: the one instructed those onely that were pre-
sent with them, the other gaue lessons vnto all nati-
ons whatsoeuer, though neuer so much distant from
them. And therefore very well saith a certaint Poet,
nowe liuing:

*O blessed letters that combine in one,
All ages past, and make one line with all:
By you we do confer with those are gone,
And the dead-liuing vnto Counsell call,
By you the ynborne shall haue communion,
Of what we feele, and what doth vs befall.*

The consideration of which premises, together
with the respect of this ouer-fruited age of the Chil-

The Epistle.

dren of the Prophets, the Land hauing more Church men then Churches, and more Preachers then Parishes to Preach in; hath moued me (though least of the Apostles yet vnwilling to hide my talent with the vnprofitable seruant) to write what I haue heretofore spoken, and to publish what I haue Written, which I prostrate as my free-will offering at the foote of the Aulter, as the poore Israelites did their Goats haire, when they had no better to bring, and as the Widdow did hir mite, when she had nothing greater to giue. And forasmuch as Curtesie is the true note of Gentilitie, and Learning is best fauoured of such as are best Learned, and matters of Religion of those that are Religious; I haue therefore made choyle of your Honor for Patron of these papers, not doubting, but that in regard of Gentilitie, you will curteously receiue it, in respect of your Learning, willingly peruse it, and for the matter and subiect of it, Patronize and protect it. Your Lordships fauourable entertainment of this, shall encourage me in greater matters hereafter to imploy my Labors vnto the memoriall of your worthines: and mooue others to peruse it the more diligently, being entertained of a Personage of such Honour and Iudgement. Thus, wishing vnto your Lordship, the accomplishment of your wishes, crauing pardon for my (perhappes) ouermuch boldnes, I humbly take my leaue, this first of Ianuary.

Your Honors to commaund.

Michael Birkhed.

I

THE RECOVERY

of Paradise.

Luke. 2. 10.

*Feare not: for behold I bring you tidings of great
ioy that shall be vnto all People. That is, vn-
to you is borne this day in the City of David
a Saniour which is Christ the Lord.*



Great is the Solemnitie of this
feast of Christ his Natiuitie, but
the shortnesse of the day, re-
quireth to reade but a short dis-
course: and no maruell if the
words we write be short, seeing God the fa-
ther made, as at this time his word (the sub-
iect of this booke) very short. If you would
knowe the shortnesse of Gods *Word*; behold
that *Word* which said by his Prophet, *I fill
both Heauen and Earth*, which was neither
Included in any thing, nor *excluded out of any
thing*, but was all in euery thing, euen that *Word*
which the Heauen of heauens could not cōtaine,
which was, *from euerlasting without beginning*

The Recouery

or ending. Was now included in a place, swaddled in cloutes, laied vp in a cratch, and become a child of a dayes age: a long word indeed, become very short; and yet what length of time, or multiplication of words is able to descipher, the incomprehensible length and breadth thereof? for euen in his humilitie, his glorie is exalted, and in the shortnesse of his name, his name is enlarged. Great are the works of the Lord, as himselfe is great, but greatest is that which he did in his little one. *Parvulus nobis venerit, sed non parum attulit, nō parum nobis contulit.* He came as a little one, but he brought not a little with him, it was no little benefit he did vs. It is no vnknowne thing to him that knoweth any thing: how glorious was the estate of Adam in paradise, being created in the Image of the God of glory, liuing in a place of all kinde of pleasure, vnder the shade of the tree of life, with a cōpanion that was meet & fit for him, Inioying the sight of God himselfe, whose countenance is the fulnes of al ioyes & felicities, nothing being forbiddē him, that might any wise delight him, saue onely the fruite of one tree that was in the midst of the garden: the penalty, if he tasted of it, was the expul-sing out of paradise, the deprivation of his plea-

pleasures, death & damnation to his body & soule, & euerlasting miseries to either amōgst the diuels in hell-fire. But what followed? *Thy princes (saith Esay) were rebellious and became the cōpanions of theeeues.* Our parents disobeyed the charge of the Almighty, accompanied Lucifer in his theeuery of Gods glory, and so became subiect vnto the forenamed damnation. Great was their fault so obstinately to haue sinned, and great was the punishment that was inflicted for their sin. For the *Earth mourneth for it, yea euen vnto the children* (as Zoroastes speaketh.) Though the father did onely eate the sower grape, yet his childrens teeth are also set on edge by it: so that we were *Damnati antequam nati.* Condemned to die, euen before wee beganne to liue. Glorious was mans condition beeing created in Gods Image, but better had it bin that he had neuer bin created, then so to haue defaced the glory of that Image. But as God is the happiest and chiefeest good, containing all happines and goodnes in himselfe, so such was his loue and fauour towards man, that he would make him partaker also of that his happines, and therefore presently he promised him a medicine for his malady, and a salue for his sore, namely, that as Sathan had

The Recouery

deiected him into the pit of hell, so his sonne should erect and lift him vp into the kingdome of heauen, if he would belieue in the one, as he had giuen credite to the other. Falshood had seduced and deceiued him, and Truth must reduce and instruct him, yet so, that after he know the Truth, hee renounce falshood, and cleaue vnto the Truth: this Truth was that word: this word was that Sonne: this Sonne was that Sauour, *which was made short, became little, and was borne as this day in the City of Dauid.*

But lest this so precious and peerelesse a Iem should lie hid in the dunghill, and be in the world, and the world know him not, it pleased the Lord by many signes and tokens, by many Prophecies and prefigurati-
ons to describe him plainly vnto all posterities, that none might alledge Ignorance for an excuse of their wickednesse. Therefore his starre was shewne vnto the wisemen of the East, by the conduct whereof they came from the rising of the Sunne, to the citty of Hierusalem, to signifie that a new Sonne of Righteousnesse was risen in the Earth, who by his bright & resplendent beames should inlighten and delight euery one that cometh into the world: many rare and prodigious

of Paradise.

gions things also were seene at that time euen amongst the Infidels and Heathen people, declaring the Restauration of the world, the Restitution of man, the Solace of the Iewe, & the Saluation, & Redemption of all mankinde to be come into the world. For as *Orosius* reporteth out of a certine streete in Roome there sprung vp a fountaine of oyle, which flowed most abundantly for the space of a whole day, and also (which is worthy to be noted) though the Romane Emperour had obtained the Scepter of the whole world, and a generall peace was concluded, so that the Temple Ianus was shut vp close (a thing scarce euer seene before.) Yet *Augustus* forbad that any should call him Lord, not without the wondering of all that heard it, and about that time he set at liberty 30000 bond-slaues which had fled from their Lords, (being prouoked no doubt) by the motion and Instinction of God himselfe: These things did God ordaine to be done in the Imperiall city, euen in the city of the Earths Emperour, to declare vnto the world that the mediator of mankinde, the Oyle of Gladnesse, the Prince of peace, was come into the world; vnto whom the title of Lord, is onely, or most rightly to be attributed, seeing

The Recouery

ing he is the true deliuerer of miserable man, the Vassall and Bond-slaue of Sinne, flying from God, from life, and from Heauen vnto Hel, vnto Death & the seruice of the Diuel, and restoreth him vnto his true Lord and Maister againe, that so being freed from Sin, and made the seruant of God, hee might attaine vnto Liberty of the Angels in Heauen. What neede I recite many Records hereof, seeing God did point at him, and distinctly name him: the Angels came & ministred vnto him, millions of men did heare him & see him: & the very diuels of Hell did acknowledge and confesse him. But of all manifestations, that is none of the obscurest that was shewne the very night of his Natiuity vnto the shepheards of Iurie, which we haue chosen for the ground-worke of this booke, and the foundation of our writing. An History which will bring you like the Wisemens starre vnto the place of his Birth, and an History, which if you marke it, wil vnfold vnto you, the fruites of his Birth.

*Feare not: for behold, I bring you tidings of great
ioy which shal be vnto all People. That is, vn-
to you is borne this day in the Citty of David
a Sauiour, which is Christ the Lord.*

These

These wordes are an Epitomy or short
sum of the whole Booke of the new Testa-
ment, cōtaining the long expected Tydings
of mans happy saluation in Iesus Christ.
They were vttered as (I saied) vnto certaine
shepheards of Iury, Shepheards that were
faithfully attending their flockes in the fields,
being the true Resemblance of gods spiritu-
all pastors, and faithfull ministers, and that
by an Angell sent as a solemne Embassadour
from the Court of Heauen. The summe of
whose message was this. That God con-
sidering the wretched estate, of his woefull
creatures and the damnable condition of the
sons of Adam, how they lay sweltring in their
fathers goare, how they stuck fast in the mire
and clay, and were not able to Recouer the
tree of Life, from which they had fallen, but
continued subiect vnto the Doome of dam-
nation, frō which, by the Law, there was no
Redemption, without satisfaction for their
fathers transgression. That therefore God
of his mercy, not vnmindefull of his promise
that he had made vnto Adam. *That the seede
of the Woman should breake the serpents Head.*
Which also, by an oth he had ratified vnto
Abraham viz: *That in his seed all the Nati-
ons of the Earth shoulde bee blessed.* Had now
sent

The Recouery

sent his son from Heauen into earth to bring man frō earth into Heauen vnto him; & that by becōming Sin for Man though he knew no sinne, that man might be made the righteousness of God in him. And therefore that they needed not to feare the death & damnation that was due vnto them for their Fathers transgressions, but with Ioyfull harts should embrace the Life and Saluation that was comming vnto them by the sonne of Gods Incarnation, in whom whosoever beleeued should not perish, but haue life euerlasting.

Feare not: for behold I bring you tidings of great Ioy which shalbe vnto, &c.

The words as you may see do generally containe an argument vnto encouragement, and in it more perticularly I obserue these 3. partes. First the encouragement it selfe, in these words, *Feare not*. Secondly, the reason of it, *for I bring you Tidings of Ioy*. Thirdly, the ioyfull tidings what it was, in these words, *vnto you is borne this day in the Citty of David, &c.* And first of the first.

Feare not] As the comfortablest comfort that Adam receiued in his Paradise of pleasure was the pleasant fruition of his Crea-

The Recouery

9

Creators presence, it being replenished with all ioyes and consolations : So since his fall, like a guilty malefactor, he hath shunned nothing more then that his sight & presence, and therefore as soone as euer he heard his voyce in the garden, hee presently sought a bush to hide his head, thinking to flie from him, from whom no man can flie, but by flying vnto him. So likewise all of his posterity, being partakers of their fathers impurity, haue shunned the sight of God, as the Executioner of their eternall misery. The Israelites had rather beene encountered by an hoste of the Philistines, by whom they were in no other likely-hood, but to be vtterly destroyed, then to come into the presence or voyce of God, by whom oftentimes they had beene most mightely protected. And Sampsons wifes parents thought the sight of God so fearefull and deadly a thing, that they halfe despaired of life, when but an Angell appeered. And so these simple shepherds were stroken downe amazed, when the Glory of this God began to shine about them. Thus sinfull Cain shaketh at euery shadow; euery tree he thinketh a gallowes, euery one that meeteth him, he deemeth will massaker him : yea, euen his owne friends
he

he mistrusteth will kill him, for he knoweth that stuble can not stand before the fire, that darkenesse cannot continue when the light approacheth, and that man must needs perish, when as the God of Iustice is come in presence, seeing man is as stuble, and God a consuming fire, seeing man is Darkenesse, and God is a Light, seeing man is wicked, & God is righteous. *Timuerunt ergo timore magno.* They feared therefore (saith Luke) with a great feare, their sinnes were the cause of their feare, and ours deseruing no lesse then theirs, we haue no cause but to feare with them: but what comfort hath the Angell brought with him? marry this. *Feare not.*

As though he should haue said, yee sorrowfull and sinfull shepheards, who by reason of your manifold sins and iniquities, are ashamed like the pensiue Publican to cast vp your polluted eyes vnto the vnspotted throne of the righteous God, but go mourning like reiected Cains, and cursing with Iob, the dayes of your Natiuitie, because yee lie subiect vnto the horrible curse of Lucifer and his Angells, by reason of your originall and actuall sinnes, and therefore feare lest God should cause the earth to swallow you vp, as it did Corah and his confederates, or
else

The Recouery

II

else to be consumed with fire, by reason of this fiery Light that shineth about you, as the Sodomites were in the dayes of Lot. If ye knew for what cause I am come downe vnto you, ye would be so farre from feare or sorrow, that you would rather with that *Democrites* passe ouer your dayes in perpetuall Laughter. For behold I bring you Tidings, and Tidings of so great Ioy, that the very mountaines, if they could heare it, would skip like Rams, and the little hills like young sheepe: so that henceforward you may sing Salomons song, as heretofore ye haue sighed out Ieremies Lamentations, wherefore looke vp and behold; behold the Angell of God who am sent from the Throne of his Almighty Maiesty, with all the rest of these heauenly Souldiers, to declare tidings of ioy vnto you; wherefore seeing that you are in such fauor with the King of Kings, the Almighty Iehouah, the Lord of hostes, in that he hath regarded you more then all the nations of the earth, in that you shall see the Redeemer of mankind, euen Iesus Christ the Son of God before any else. Seeing. (I say) you are in such fauor, and so regarded of him, who is onely to be feared, there is no cause that ye ought to feare.

But

But here by the way wee must note what Feare is meant in this place : for a Diuision must needs be granted, els there wil be found an Opposition in Religion, which Religion denieth, and a concordance of repugnant contrarieties in one subiect, which Reason in no sort admitteth. For Feare is called *Principium sapientia*, the beginning of wisedome, and Salomon saith, it is the root of Life, the fulnes of knowledge, the glory and renowne of a Christian, and the most happy gift. And Dauid saith, that the Lord hath provided an euerlasting heritage for them that feare him: and yet it is said here, Feare not. S. Paul in the eight to the Romanes setteth downe two kindes of feare, the one a Seruill feare, proper vnto the diuells and his damnable adherents, the other a filiall feare, or the feare of children towards their parents, which is peculiar vnto the Seruants of God. A seruill feare may be seene in Pharao, who feared the Lord when he let the people of Israell depart; but it was onely for feare lest hee should be destroyed by those plags & punishments which were denounced against him, & which he had begun already to haue tasted of: So Cain feared when he had slaine his brother, so Iudas feared when hee had betrayed

trayed his maister. Thus the Gentiles feared their Idols; for it was not for any Loue that they could beare the, being so wicked & vngodly as they were; but only lest they should be hurt by them, if they did not serue them. Of this feare Saint Peter speaking saith *Timorem eorum ne timueritis*, Feare not their feare, or feare not after their maner of fearing. meaning the seruil feare of wicked men. But of the other kinde of feare he saith presently after *Dominum autem Christus sanctificate in Cordibus vestris cum modestia et timore*. But sanctifie the Lord Iesus in your harts with modesty and feare. And S. Paul writing of this feare saith, *Cum timore & tremore vestrum &c.* worke out your saluation with modesty and feare. And this feare is called the feare of children, which feare their Parents, more for displeasing them, or prouoking their anger, then for the punishment, which by the offence might redownd vnto themselves. This feare was neither forbidden the shepherds, nor vs, nor any else, but onely that seruil feare, which the Law did bring with it, whē nothing but plagues & punishmēt was denounced against them that did not whatsoever by the Lawe was commaunded vnto them. Therefore many of the Iewes did ser-

The Recouery

wilely feare God, but they loued him not, as may appeare, in that they had rather haue worshipped any stock or stone if thei might haue had their choise without feare of punishment. But now, seeing Christ is come to fulfill the Law for vs, and that God doth require nothing but our endeouore, if with firme faith we cleaue vnto the merriits, and suffrings of his sonne, therefore in this respect it is said vnto the Shepheards, & in them vnto vs, *Feare not.* And thus much of the comfort, now of the reason thereof why we need not feare.

For beholde, I bring you Tidings, of Great Ioy which shall be vnto all people.

Non oportet esse tristitia locum ubi est natalis gaudiorum. There ought not to be any place for feare or care saith Augustine, when the Birthday of Ioy & blisse is come in presence for can the childrē of the Bridochamber moorne when the bridegrome is with them? haue the thunderclaps of Sinai bin able to deieft vs, & shall not the songs of Sion be as forcible to erect vs? shall the Law terrifie vs, when the Gospel is sent to cheere vs? But what is this that he saith, that this Ioy shall be vnto

all people? shall all be saued? shall there be no lost sheep in the house of Israel? no goats to stand on the left hand in the day of iudgement? shall all be carried into Abrahams bosome? shall all be voide of feare by his comming? I answer, the Lord knoweth who are his: And hath told vs, that as the way of Life is narrowe and the gate straight, so there shalbe but few that shall finde it. For many saith he shal cry, Lord, Lord, open to vs, and shalbe sent away with *Nescio vos*; I know you not; And in his prayers Christ saith of himselfe that he prayed not for all the world, but onely for those that his father had giuen him out of the world. Therefore it is manifest, that although the Angel saith, that this Iose of his Birth should be vnto all, yet that all shall not be made Partakers of the fruits thereof. But as touching the meritts of Christ we must speake after two sorts; either according to Sufficiencie; or as touching Efficiencye. Christ his Death was sufficient to haue saued all, but it was not efficient vnto any, but onely vnto those that beleeued in him, which were not borne of water and bloud, but of the spirit of God. And so, by all, we may vnderstand the kinds of people, as a learned father saith, *Non pro singu-*

The Recouery

lis generum, sed pro generibus singulorum, &c.
 Christ died not for all, of euery kinde, but
 for the kinde of all; euen for those that were
 of his Church, and beleued in him. And
 in this respect saith Augustine, let euery one
 wipe his teares from his eyes, and bannish
 feares from his heart, that doth beeleeue in
 this Saviour that is sent. Art thou a sinner
 (saith he) Reioyce now, because a pardon is
 sent from the Iudge vnto thee. Art thou a
 Gentill, Reioyce now: because thou shalt re-
 ceiuie saluation with the Iewes, hast thou bin
 a stranger from God, and an Aliant from his
 couenant? be glad now because thou mayest
 be ingrafted into his Body. And in an other
 place he saith, Reioyce ye Iust, because it is
 the Birthday of your Iustifier: Reioyce ye
 feeble and sicke, because it is the Birthday of
 your spirituall Phisition: Reioyce ye that
 liue in captiuitie, because it is the Birthday of
 your Deliuerer: Reioyce ye seruants, be-
 cause it is the Birthday of your Lord: Re-
 ioyce ye freemen in heauen, because it is the
 Birthday of him that did set you free: Re-
 ioyce all Christians, because it is the Birth-
 day of Christ: and to be short, Reioyce all
 people, because it is the Birthday of the Savi-
 our of all people. If any man haue cause to
 feare

feare or be sorrowfull still, this is the cause; that though Light came into the world, yet he loued Darknesse more then the Light, because his works should be euill. And thus much of the reason of the comfort why they should not feare : now to the Tidings of Ioy it selfe.

Vnto you is borne this day in the Citty of Dauid a Sauour, which is Christ the Lord.

Wherein wee will note, first the Person who was borne : Secondly, the Person of whom he was borne : Thirdly, when : Fourthly, where : and Fifthly, for what cause he was borne.

In the beginning of this Treatise, you heard, in part, of the misery of Adam after his fall, that whereas he had bin placed in Paradise, a garden of pleasure, inioying the sight and presence of God, his state was comparable euen to the Angels of Heauen : for though he were subiect vnto God his Creator, yet was he Soueraigne ouer all his Creatures, his labour was rest, and his rest might haue bin continuall : his paine was pleasure, and his pleasure might haue bin eternall ; he had health without danger of sicknesse, and life without feare of death, the flesh and the

The Recouery

spirit neuer strived, the body obeyed the soules and the soule governed the body: In a word, neither hell nor graue, death nor diuell, could so much as touch or trouble him, so standing as God had appointed. But when he presumed to taste of that fruite that onely was forbidden him, presently the case was cleane altered, so that in stead of life, he heard that fearefull sentence: *Then shalt die the Death.* Then was the Earth accursed for his sake, and he was thrust out of Paradise, in the entrance whereof, God set the Cherubines with the blade of a sword shaking, to keepe the way of the tree of life: so that he was faine to betake himselfe to this miserable and wretched world, the kingdome of the Serpent: whither could he now goe, but he should meete with a curse, seeing all things were accursed? What might he do, but lie sweating in the miserable and pittifull pangs of desperation? What comfort might hee finde in his wife, or his wife in him, but teares and torments, sorrowes and sighes, crying and howling, weeping and wailing, groaning and gnashing of teeth? Beeing so clogged with the intollerable burden of their sinnes, so ouerwhelmed with the bloody floudes of Gods vengeance, so pittifully
and

and plentifully powred out vpon them: now they perceiue the wages of their sinne to be death and damnation: now they pine away for hunger, and would be glad of the worst and sowrest apple in all Paradise: now they thirst like the Hart after the water of those sweet running Riuers: now they feeble the want of Gods presence and amiable countenance, they perceiue the Serpent to be busie about their heeles, most greedily sucking their blood, neither can they both finde out the meanes to shake him off, or bruise his head: therefore they sit like two children hauing by misfortune slaine their deere and louing father, weeping and howling the one to the other: they had slaine the Image of their heauenly father, they had poisoned their soules with an Apple which the venomous serpent had spit vpon: they feeble the worme of a guilty conscience lie gnawing their bowells, and all Creatures disobeyed them, and rebelled against them, in that they had shewed themselves disobedient rebels against their Lord and Creator. But what followed? The mercifull and louing Lord, when we stood at this point, and in a maner at defiance with him, although he saw that the imaginations of mans heart would be e-

The Recovery

uill, and that he would alwayes beare a stiffe stomacke against him and his holy will; yet did he not vtterly cast vs off, but blessed, O blessed be his name therefore, hee hath shewne vs a glad and cheerefull countenance, it greeued him that we had deserued his wrath, but it would haue greeued him much more, if that we had died the deserued death: therefore that Iustice might haue his course, and his mercy neuerthelesse might be seene ouer all his workes, he was content to send the Diadem of his deitie, that precious pearle, his owne glory, in whom was all his delight, his onely begotten, his best beloued Sonne, euen him before whom the 24. Elders threwe downe their Crownes humbly: whom the Angels magnified, and all the hoast of heauen worshipped continually: and to this end, that he might be borne of sinfull flesh, that it being defiled with sinne, might be cleansed by the seede of righteousness; to be hungry for materiall bread; that our hungry soules might be fed with the bread of life: to be polluted with our spittle, that we might be cleansed by his spirit to be condemned to death by vs, that we might attaine vnto life by him, to be crowned with a crowne of thornes, that we might

might be crowned with crownes of glory, to sustaine our sorrowes that we might attaine his ioyes : and in a word, to be borne in misery, to liue in beggery, and to die with ignominy: for his cradle was a cratch, his life crossed, and his kind of death accursed, that mankind might be blessed : but of this hereafter.

The person of whom he was born is most distinctly expressed, and expressly designed in Luke, both with the name of his espoused Husband, the Citty she dwelt in; the linage and Tribe she came of, and the messenger that was sent from god vnto hir. All which I thinke was not superuacuously, or in vaine set downe, seeing that neither a leafe from the tree, nor an haire can fall to the ground without the will and prouidence of God. There is not a Letter or sillable in the Gospell, but hath some special vse, and also is replenished with celestially and heauenly sweetnesse, if it haue a dilligent examiner, that can tell how to sucke Honey out of the Rocke, and Oile out of the Flint stone, as the prophet speaketh Esay. 45. *The Angell Gabriell was sent to a virgin espoused to a man, whose name was Ioseph. Luke 1. &c.* But what virgin was it that was so venerable, as to bee saluted of an Angell, and yet so humble as to be espoused to Ioseph a carpenter?

The Recouery

penter? O most excellent no doubt was the
 commixtion of virginity and humillity; nei-
 ther doth that person smally delight God, in
 whome Humility commendeth Virginity,
 and Virginity exorneth, and beautifieth hu-
 mility. Wee heare she was a Virgin, and
 and we heare she was humble; if we can not
 imitate the virginity of this humble woman,
 yet let vs follow the Humility of that Virgin.
 Commendable is Virginity, but more neces-
 sary is Humillity: for that is but Counsell'd.
 but this is commaunded: that we are invited
 vnto, but vnto this we are compelled. Of
 that it is said, I would that euery one were a
 virgine as my selfe; but of this it is affirmed,
 That except we be as humble as little Chil-
 dren we cannot enter Heauen. For without
 Virginity a man may be saued, but without
 Humillity hee can not. And therefore saith
 Mary in her song of thanksgiuing. He respe-
 cted (what? not my Virginity) but the
 Lowly estate of his handmaid. Of this hum-
 ble virgin came Christ in his humility, & for
 this he respected hir, to shew vs how he re-
 specteth the humble. It was meet that shee
 should be meeke and Humble: of whom the
 meeke and humble in hart should proceed;
 & it was requisite that she should be a pure
 Virgine

Virgin & vnspotted, of whom the Immaculate & vnspotted Sauror should be born, that should cleanse the spots of the impure world. Adam and Eue as they were the begetters of all, so were they the destroyers of all; yea and which is a more mischiefe, they first destroyed vs before they begat vs; for their Seed being impure by their sinne we were al conceaued sinfull, and subiect vnto destruction; The consideratiō whereof might cause vs to feare with the Shepheards; But saith the Angell, *Feare not*, for ye haue wherewith to redeeme the Impurity of your conception: euen the purity of the conception of your Redeemer. If he had bin vncleane himselfe in his cōception, how could he haue cleansed ours; therefore to make them cleane which were borne of vncleane seed he was conceiued without any seed of man. For (as the Angell Gabriell tould hir) the Holy Ghost came vpon hir, & the power of the most High ouershadowed hir. And therefore that holy thing that was borne of hir, was, & is called the son of God: what greater miracle then this? yea who euer heard so great miracles as these, as that God should be man and yet God stile? That a virgin should be a mother without the corruption of hir Virginity? Surely I may now with security

The Recouery

security expect, that that holy one shall not see corruption, but shall rise againe for our Iustification, seeing he would not suffer corruption in the Virginitie of his mother.

Further, we may obserue this in the wisdom of God, how he maketh the woman a Conduite Pipe of our comfort and Felicity, which before was the instrument of our care and misery, so that as before we laid the fault vpon Eua, Saying, The woman which thou gauest me, gaue me to eate, &c. So now we may with ioyfull harts say to God; *Mary* which thou gauest me, gaue me of the Tree of Life, & I did eate of it. And it was sweeter the hony vnto my mouth, for in it thou hast reuited me: Thus the wise woman rebuildeth the house, which the foolish had cast downe before; *Mary*, like the tree of life, beareth the fruite of Saluation for vs, as Eue offered the apple of Damnation vnto vs.

Nowe let vs proceede to the time of his birth, which was in the midst of winter, euen of the colde and tempestuous winter, when all thinges seeme dead and withered, when the Trees, not onely beare no fruite, but also, want their Leaues: when the birdes sing not, nor the Sunne warmeth, nor the heauens are cleere, nor the Aire tollerable,

nor

nor the Earth delightfull, nor any creature
cheerefull, euen in this withered, barren, and
frozen time of the yeare; May of the world
yea in the dark night of this winter was our
Saviour borne: for then was the night of
which the Apostle speaking saith now is
past, when darkenes was ouer the face of the
deepe, yea a spirituall and inward darkenesse
of the minde, when the Light of Knowledge
and Vnderstanding was very much obscur-
red, & the darkenes of ignorance had posses-
sed mens hearts, that few had the true know-
ledge of God, or could be instructed in the
path of his wayes. There was no Prophe-
tisme amongst them, no chirping of birds was
heard in their Land, there was a barrennes,
not onely of good workes, but euen of the
leaues of good words. Theeues made their
dens in the Temple, and Foxes crept in
to Sion: Charity was cold, and mens hearts
were frozen: Iustice was banished, and un-
righteousnes embraced: and therefore ac-
cording to the time of the yeare, I mean the
course of their life, the stormes and tempests
of Gods heauy iudgments, might with rea-
son be expected. But euen in this cold dead
winter, and darke time of the night, warme
and cheerefull Light appeered vnto the
Shep-

The Recouery

Shepheards, and the glory of the Lord did shine most brightly vpon them, and the Tidings of this ioyfull Nativity was tould vnto them, which is all one with that which the apostle saith. That when we were Sinners, Christ died for vs. And this was the fulnesse of time. Gal. 4. for the fulnesse of Earthly and temporal things, had made a dearth and barrenesse of heauenly and spiritual. This was the time which the Prophet Ioell prophesied of, *when the mountaines should drop downe new wine, and the hils should flow with milke, and all the Rivers of Iudah should flowe with waters.* This was the day wherein God promised *the Heauens should send downe their Dew, and the Cloudes drop Righteousnesse, and Salvation and Iustice should growe foorth of the Earth together.* This was the day, which many *Kinges and Prophets desired to see, and could not see it.* Yea happy were they that were so happy as to hope for this day. Father Simeon desired to liue to this day, though he liued not a day longer, and therefore as soone as euer he saw him whom his soule had so long longed after, presently he said, *Lord now lettest thou thy seruant depart in peace, for myne eyes haue seene thy saluation. &c.* This was the comfortable day, in the hope wherof
the

the Prophets comforted vp themselves and the people, declaring it in such sort, as though the insensible creatures, as the mountaines and the vallies should be refreshed thereby: Such was the prophesie of Esay *Reioyce, O heauens, and be glad O earth, burst forth into prayes O mountaines, for God hath visited his people, and will haue mercy on his afflicted.* And the Prophet Zacharie saith: *Reioyce, for great ioy O daughter Sion, shout out for ioy O daughter Ierusalem, Behold thy king cometh vnto thee.* If these reioiced, so much in that the Messias should come, How much more should our soules magnifie the Lord, and our spirits reioyce in him, who already is come, and as this day borne vnto vs? This is the day which the Lord did promise to our forefathers, let vs reioyce and be glad in it. Let vs clap our handes for ioy and gladnes, let vs sing vnto the Lord with the voyce of melodie: for Christ our Sauour is borne as this day, let vs sing prayes therefore all of vs with vnderstanding. But some man wil say, this day was long ago, it is olde and stale newes that Christ was borne. I know indeede that the Messias was borne, not onely long before our times, but euen before all times. But I reade also, that Iesus is yesterday, and to day,

and

The Recouery

and the same for euer : and therefore if the fathers reioiced to see his day before it came, we may as well celebrate the memoriall of it as present now it is come.

But now let vs proceede and inquire out the place of his birth : And that the Euangelists affirme to be Bethlechem the citie of David, what if it be a poore village ? what if it be the least in all the land of Iudea ? shall it be an argument that he was not born there ? nothing lesse, for what was more befeeming him, that when he was rich, became poore for vs : and of a great and mightie Lord, became a little child, then to be born in a poore and little village. And in this he declareth vnto vs, how greatly he affecteth the poore in spirit, and those that are of a lowly and humble hart : For as he sayd vnto his Disciples of his washing of their feete, so it may be said of his other actions, I haue given you an example, that you should doe as I haue done : And in this shall all men knowe that ye are my Disciples. If thou wouldst distinguish betwixt the corne and the chaffe, cast them forth : the good corne descendeth, but the chaffe will ascend : the wicked are still aspiring, and mounting vpward in this world, but the godly cast down their crowns with

with the 24. Elders at the feete of the Lamb :
Dicit se filius indignum ut, pater eum iudicet
aliquid, The prodigall sonne termeth him-
 selfe vnworthy, that his father might terme
 him worthy : for it is alwayes true, that *Cum*
inclinator humilitas, excitatur misericordia,
 when humilitie stoupeth downe, mercy ari-
 seth vp. And therefore saith Peter : *Humilia-*
mini sub potenti manu domini, ut vos exaltet in
diem Iudicii, Humble your selues vnder the
 mightie hand of God, that he may exalt you
 in the day of iudgement : The tree doth not
 grow vpward except it first take root down-
 ward : The higher wee meane to builde an
 house, the lower we must lay the foundati-
 on, for he that thinketh to doe the one, with-
 out performing the other, may seeme frugall
 in the beginning, but will prooue a foole in
 the ende : The high hils seeme next vnto the
 cloudes, but the lowe vallies are most refre-
 shed by them, euen so God resisteth the
 proude, but giueth grace vnto the humble :
 The glow-worme shineth bright, and in the
 darke gloriously, but is blacke and vgly
 when it commeth to light : whatsoeuer the
 condition of the proude man seemeth now
 in the darknes of this worlde, I am sure that
 when the Sonne of righteousness shall shine

The Recouery

in the last day it shall prooue very lowe and base.

I would that ye were all little Bethelēm of Iuda, poore in spirit, and little in your owne eyes, that Christ might vouchsafe to bee borne in you by his spirit, as he was there in the flesh. Bethelēm signifieth as much as the house of bread, therefore it is good to bee there: and if we may not build Tabernacles of abode in that place, yet let vs send thither with Iacob, our Camels and Asses, I meane our affections, that we may liue, and not die: It is the house of bread, euen of that liuing bread that came downe from heauen, of which whosoever eateth shall liue for euer. Happy were the people that were in such a case, yea blessed was Bethelēm that had the Lord for their bread. Let vs pray, beloued, that we may be also Bethelēm, the house of bread, that the Lord may turhe in vnto vs; for otherwise, if we be vnprovidēd, as he that was faine to trouble his neighbour at midnight for a fewē loaves, we are not fit to receiue so great a guest. But who hath this Bread? euen he whose heart is confirmed & strengthened, for bread strengthneth the hart of man; and who is confirmed or strengthened in hart? but he whose hart is fetled to the
Com.

Commandements of the Lord, which doth not wauer in his faith, but goeth forward with a determined hart towards the heauenly Canaan, forgetting the flesh pots of Egypt which are behinde, and not so much as looking backe towards the forsaken Sodom. For if any one be doubtfull and wauering in his faith, if a man be not resolu'd to proceed in his vocation, but is in a quandary, whither he should go forward or backward, deny his faith, or maintaine it, forsake his sinnes, or returne to his vomit: this man is not prepared to receiue the Lord: Christ will not be borne in such a mans house who wanteth faith the bread of life, as the Scripture calleth it, saying, the iust shall liue by faith. But what? did Bethleem beleue in Christ? did shee so abound with the bread of faith, that the Lord chose his Inne there, rather then any where else? nay surely, she was farre from that in nature, which she seemed to be by hir name, though she brought forth this Sonne, according to the duty of a mother, yet she was farre from a motherlike affection towards him: though the walles of hir house contained him carnally, yet the affections of hir hart would not entertaine him spiritually. And indeed, we may say of this as Paul doth

The Recouery

of other like mysteries: All things were done in former times, in types and figures. The beleeuing soule is that true city of bread wherein Christ is dayly borne spiritually, as he was in Bethelern carnally: So that I thinke this name was giue hir, rather as a prophesie that the bread of Life, Christ Iesus should be borne in hir, then for that shee was fed or nourished by him.

Furthermore, the holy ghost not onely hath expressed the name of the towne, but also the very house, yea, and the very place or roome of the house wherein he was borne, neither is it to be thought curiosity in vs to search the meaning of euery particular, which the spirit of wisdom so curiously hath expressed. *Sub sordido pallio lateat sapientia.* Vnder a patched coate may lurke wisdom, and vnder a plaine stile, may mystically be contained most learned institutions; so that, not onely the deep Ocean sea is to be sounded, but also the shallow foords of Meander are diligently to be considered. Neither do I thinke it haphazard that Christ was borne in a stable (for such is the place that the Euangelists affirme that he was born in) but that it was appointed by God for speciall reasons long before, who doth nothing rash-

rashly, but hath a reason of all his actions.

Ye heard before how honorable was the condition of Adam in his Innocencie, being like vnto God, and created in his Image; But the Psalmist witnesseth, man being in honor, and wanting vnderstanding, he was compared vnto the Beasts that perish, and in natural affections became indeed a very beast, and for his beastly similitude and resemblance stood tied as it were at the manger, to receiue the fodder of beasts. A strange alteration (beloued) that he that was the possessor of Paradise, the lord of the whole earth, the household seruāt of the god of saboth, the brother of the blessed and celestiaall spirits, and the perfect Image of the holy Trinity, should so degenerate from his kinde, as to become so lowe and base as a Beast. But marke heere, and consider the proceedings of god: for whereas man being become a beast had left the Heauenly bread of Life, delighting more in the fodder of Beastes; Behold now that Bread of Life is turned into Flesh, nay into grasse, which is the food of Beasts (for all flesh is grasse) and lieth in a racke or manger to be eaten and chewed of vs beasts. Therefore let the Oxe now know his own, and the Asse his masters crib. Let them drawe neere

The Recouery

to him in the stable, whom they fled from in the garden. Let them honor him in the manger, whom they contemned in his maiesty, and let them feede on him beeing grasse, whom they loathed when he was bread; yea let them with an eager and lively faith ruminate and chew vpon him, that they may be nourished and grow vp by him. He must be receiued by Hearing, chewed by Vnderstanding and digested by beleeuing, or as another saith. The eating of his flesh, is a certaine hunger and desire, to be incorporated into him. And indeed as our sauiour sayth. He that eateth the flesh of the sonne of man &c. shall liue for euer.

A Sauiour] But wherefore did Christ so debase himselfe? Euen that he might be a Sauior vnto vs: that he might drawe vs vnto him with the ropes of man, and with the cords of his loue, as Ose speaketh. And therefore he leaueth no meanes vntried, to bring vs vnto him, no not though they be neuer so base, as to be borne in a Stable.

There is none of vs that liue in this region of death, in the infirmities of the flesh, and amidst the Temptations that are commonly offered, but hath need of Counsell, of Help, and

and of comfort. for we are *Faciles ad seducendum, debiles ad operandum, & fragiles ad resistendum*: if we would discern betwixt good and euill, we are easily deceiued. If we trie to do good, we are quickly tyred. And if we are tempted, we are suddenly subdued. Therefore to enlighten our blindnes, to help our weaknes, and to defend our frailnesse, Christ was borne vnto vs. Therefore *Feare not*. For if he be in vs, who shall deceiue vs? If hee bee with vs, what can we not do in him that strengthneth vs? If he stand for vs, what need we care who be against vs? seeing he is the *faithful Counseller*, which can neither deceiue nor be deceiued, seeing he is the *Almightie God*, which is neuer wearied; seeing he is the *strong man*, that bindeth Sathan, breaketh the Serpents Head, and is neuer vanquished. Wherefore *Feare not*, O Adam, neither flie any longer. Runne not in to the bushes from the sight of thy Maker, for behold, hee hath sent thee this day a Sauour. Once thou wast perswaded by the serpent, to sin against God, and being taken in the fact, thou hadst reason to feare. Yea perhaps he brandished his fiery sword against thee; but now it is not so. He commeth not with weapons, to punish, but with mercy, to preserue. If thou saist

The Recouery

thou heardst his voice, and therefore fledst; why? he is an Infant, and without any voyce, and if he haue a voyce, it is a voyce more to be pitied then feared. Yea in this thou shalt know, that he is come to saue thee, and not destroy thee, in that he fighteth for thee against such as rose against thee. Thou hadst but two enemies, Sinne and Death, the death of the body, and the death of the soule: hee commeth to destroy either, and to saue thee from both: therefore feare not, he destroyed sinne in his owne person, when hee tooke mans flesh vpon him without any pollution: For great was the violence that was offered vnto sinne, when humane nature, which was alwayes before as it were in a leprosie, was found in Christ as white as snowe: therefore I hope, yea I am assured that he can plucke out the beame in mine eye, which hath neuer a moate in his owne, that he may satisfie for my sinne, which was neuer defiled himselfe with any. I reade of two that were called Iesus, that is, Saviour, who as they went before this that we speake of, so I thinke they were types and prefigurations of him. One of which brought the people out of Babilon, the other brought them into Canaan, both defended them from their enemies, but neither

ther saved them from their finnes : But this
 delivereth vs from our finnes, bringeth vs
 out of bondage, and placeth vs as kings in
 the land of the living. Sinne had made a se-
 paration of the bodie from the soule, and the
 soule from the bodie, & of both from God:
 but Iesus hath brought them all together a-
 gain, yea & in a far neerer coniunction then
 ever before. For now they that were at mu-
 tual variance, are now reconciled friends. Yea
 and so reconciled, that as in the blessed Deity
 there is a trinitie in persons, but an vnitie in
 substance: Euen so in this happy reconcili-
 ation there is a Trinitie in substance, but an
 Vnity in the persons. And as there the Tri-
 plicitie of persons doth not breake the vnity,
 nor the simplicitie of the vnity doth not di-
 minish the trinitie: So heere in like manner
 the persons doth not confound the substan-
 ces, nor the substances doe hinder the vnity
 of the person; for the word, the Soule, and
 flesh, are become one person, and these three
 are one, and this one thing is three, not by
 confusion of the substances, but by the vni-
 tie of the person: O wonderfull and super-
 excellent vnion! who euer heard that things
 so diuerse should so meete together, as to be
 one person; yea, so one person, that whatso-
 euer

The Recovery

euer God may be sayde to haue done in the
 body, the body may be sayd to haue done it.
 And whatsoeuer the body suffereth, God
 may be sayd to haue suffered, by reason of this
 coniunction. The Angels surely were asto-
 nished hereat, seeing him beneath themselves,
 whom they did alwayes adore and worship
 aboue themselves. The Cherubins which
 God commaunded to be placed at the two
 ends of the Arke of the couenant, with their
 face being turned one towards another, and
 both looking on the mercyseate, do signifie
 as much vnto vs, as that they admyred and
 wondered to see a woork of so great pietie.
 Wee. To see God made the propitiatory sacri-
 fice of the worlde, and to debase himselfe so
 low as to become a man. But behold the pro-
 phecie (as I may terme it) of Adam fulfilled,
 Man (quoth he) shall deaue father and mo-
 ther, and cleaue vnto his wife, and they two
 shall be one fleshe. Christ Iesus leaueth his
 Father and the Angelles in Heauen, for to
 afforiate himselfe vnto his spouse in earth,
 and (as you haue heard) she is bone of his
 bone, and flesh of his flesh, for they are no
 more two but one person. And this beloued,
 is tydings of great ioy, for now, according to
 the lawes of wedlocke, we may assure our
 selues

selues to haue all thinges in comition with him; so that he shall take vpon him our sins and transgressions as his owne; and we againe shall be partakers of his puritie and holinesse as our owne; That our debts shall be required at his hands, and we be saued harmles & discharged of them; which is all one with that which is sayd here; that a Saviour is born vnto vs. But this by the way; wee must not now forget, that it is our partes and duties to forget likewise our owne people and fathers house; to abandon all strange loues, and to admit none into the fellowship of that spiritual bedde, but to cleaue onely vnto him, to honor and obey him, to reuerence and loue him, to keepe our chastities vnspotted; our soules and bodies pure and vndefiled for him: And as our nature is one with his who so is heavenly and diuine; so to liue an heavenly & diuine life, neither louing any thing that he lotheth, or lothing any thing that he loueth, but that his will be our will, and his precepts our continuall practises.

As he hath ouercome Sinne in his owne person, in being conceiued, and liuing without Sinne, so hath he deliuered vs also from the guilt therof, by suffering the punishment for vs, and imputing his Righteousnes vnto

The Recovery

vs: also in that he ouercame Sin, it appeareth
 plainly that he hath vanquished death. For
 death is but the stipend and wages of Sinne,
 and as it were the effect and fruite of Sinne.
 For if man had auoyded the first, he should
 surely haue escaped the latter, for it was not
 the corruption of our bodies that made our
 soules sinfull, but the Sinne of our Soules
 that made our bodies corruptible. And ther-
 fore if the fountaine be drie, the brookes
 must needs be drie: If the cause be taken a-
 way, the effects must of necessity follow, as
 if the Sunne be darke, the Moone and the
 Starres can giue no light: death a great while
 amazed al mankind. (I speake of the eternall
 and neuer-dying death, of which Gregory
 speaking saith *Mors erit immortalis, defectus
 indeficiens, & finis infinitus*, vnto which belon-
 geth the worm that neuer dieth, when a man
 shall be alwayes dying and neuer dead euer-
 lastingly, hauing an end, and yet no end; stil
 decaying, and neuer decayed. Because his
 end euer beginneth, his death euer liueth,
 and his decay neuer ceaseth. From which, by
 the Law, there was no Redemption, which
 would haue brought into eternall subiection
 all creatures whatsoeuer, if this Sauour and
 deliuerer had not bin born vnto vs, so that e-
 uery

uery foule like the mothers in Ramah, might haue lustly sighed forth those dolefull dirges of weeping, mourning, and lamentation; and with Iob haue cursed the dayes of their Natiuitie, by reason of the torments and tortures of the dead. But as the Asse called *Cumanius asinus*, ietting vp and downe in a Lions skin, did for a while terrifie his maister, but afterward being descried, did do him no good seruice: So death which sometimes made afraid the wisemen of the world, by his skin or sting of Eternity. Nowe since our Saviour hath bereaued him thereof, seemeth contemptible, euen vnto Children, so that they dare boldly goe vnto it, for they know it shall benefite them very much: for if they be oppressed with any miseries or calamities in this life, when they shall come to death, they shall be discharged, and death as an Asse shall beare their burdens for them; yea they know, that death vnto them shall bee no death, but an entrance into euerlasting life, and therefore they feare not.

God is the life of the soule, as the Soule is of the bodie, by sinning voluntarily the Soule lost God hir life, therefore she can not now at hir pleasure giue life. She would not be gouerned of God, therefore now she can

not

The Recovery

not gouerne the body. Having not obeyed hir superiour why should she command hir inferiour. God found his creature rebellious against him. The Soule was found a transgressor of Gods law, now therefore she findeth a law in hir members repugning the law of hir mind. Sinne separated betwixt God and hir, therefore death doth sepetate betwixt hir and the body. The Soule could not be diuided from God, but by sin, neither can the body from the Soule, but by death: what injury therefore suffered she, if she suffered that of hir subiect which she committed hir self against hir prince? Nothing surely was more agreeable vnto Iustice, then that death should be rewarded with death; spirituall with corporall, and voluntary with necessary. Whenas man therefore had deserved according to either nature, to suffer this double death, the one spirituall and voluntary, the other corporall and necessary: from either of them the man-god Christ Iesus most mightily hath deliuered vs, by his owne corporall and voluntary death: and in that one of his, hath satisfied for both of ours. If he had not died corporally, he had not paid our debt, and if he had not died voluntarily, his death had not bin meritorious.

But

But now if (as it is said) the merit of death is sinne, and the wages of sinne is death. Christ remitting and forgiuing our sinnes, and dying for sinners, the merit is abolished, & the debt is discharged. But how shall we knowe that Christ can forgiue vs our sinnes? euen by this, in that he is God: But how shall wee knowe that hee is God? his miracles doe prooue it: for he doth the works which no man else can doe, yea God himselfe from heauen hath confirmed the same. Therefore if Christ be for vs, who is against vs? If Iesus iustifie vs, who shall condemne vs? It is he, and no other, to whom we confesse our sins, saying, Against thee onely haue I sinned, &c. Who could better, nay who could at all forgiue vs that which was committed against him? Or how can he not do this, which can do all things? In a word, if I can pardon that which is committed against me, if I will, shall not God our Christ be able to forgiue that which is committed against him, if he wil? If therefore hee can forgiue and pardon our sinnes, both because hee is omnipotent, and onely can, because they are onely done against him. Surely blessed is the man to whom this Lord Christ will not impute sinne. Therefore we know that Christ, by the
power

The Recouery

power of his diuinity is able to forgie sinne: now of his will who need to doubt? For hee that debased him selfe so much, as to take our flesh vpon him, and to suffer death for vs, shall we thinke that he will not imparte vnto vs his righteousness? surely yes, so that as it is euident by the consideration of his deitie, that he is able to forgie our sinnes: so it is manifest by the consideration of his Humanity, that he is willing so to do. But what other argument haue we that he hath vanquished death? marry this, because hee suffered it which did not deserue it. And therefore with what reason can that bee required of vs, which an other hath already paid for vs? hee that tooke away the merrit of sinne, by giuing his righteousness vnto vs, hee hath paid the debt of death, and restored life vnto vs; for so death being vanquished, life is restored, as sinne being taken away, righteousness is returned.

But how could he die which was God? Euen in this respect, that hee was man. But how could the death of one man satisfie for an other? because he was Iust and Innocent that died: As he was a man, he might die, but being guiltlesse, it was not necessary. Indeed a sinner is not able to satisfie the debt of death

death for an other sinner, for euery one dieth for his owne sinne: but he that hath no cause to die for his owne, shall we not thinke his death may be a ranfome for an other? Surely by how much the more vniustly hee dieth which hath not deserued death, by so much the more iustly he liueth for whom he so dieth. But what equity is it (saist thou) that an innocent person should die for the guilty? I tell thee, it is not Iustice; but mercy: if it should haue bin Iustice, then he had not died voluntarily, but of duty: if of duty, then he himselfe should die indeed, yet he for whom he so died should not liue. But neuerthelesse if it be not Iustice, yet it is not against iustice, otherwise God could not haue bin iust and mercifull at once. But although one iust man may satisfie for one sinner, yet howe is it that one may satisfie for many? for it might seeme inough, if one dying for one, do restore Life vnto one. To this the Apostle shall answere, As by the offence of one, the fault came on all men to the Condemnation of death: So by the Righteousnes of one, the benefit abounded towards all men to the iustification of Life. For as by one mans disobedience many were made Sinners: So by the Obedience of one, many are become

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Righte-

The Recouery

Righteous. But perhaps one man might restore Righteousnes vnto many, but Life, not so. By one man (saith he) death entered into the world, and so by one is Life regayned; For as by Adam all die, so by Christ shall all be made alieue. For what! shal one man sinne and all become guilty, and shall the Righteousnes of one redownd but to one only? was gods Iustice such, as to condemne al for one, and cannot his mercy be as great, as to saue all by one? Or could Adam do more in euill, then Christ in good? Shall Adams Sin be imputed vnto me, and shall not Christes righteousness belong vnto me? Shall his disobedience be the cause of my Death, and shall not Christs obedience restore me to life? but thou wilt say, we are worthely guilty of Adams Sinne, because we were contained in him when he sinned, and were begotten of his flesh in the sinfull Lust of the Flesh. But I say, more truly are we begotten of god according to the spirit, then of Adam according to the flesh: I meane, if we are of the number of those whom God hath predestinated be fore the creation of the world vnto Life; And that we are begotten of god S. John witnesseth where he saith, Which were not begotten of blood, nor after the will of the

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the Flesh, nor of Man, but of God. And in one of his Epistles he likewise maketh mention of this holy generation, saying. He that is borne of God sinneth not. But thou wilt say, our carnall concupiscence and sinne, testifieth that we haue descended of sinners according to the flesh, and not of God. I answer, this generation or birth is not seene in the flesh, but in the spirit and minde: and that of those onely that can say with the Apostle, we haue the minde of the Lord, and who haue the spirit, bearing witness to their spirits, that they are the sonnes of God: for by the spirit of God, chastitie is infused into our mindes, as by the flesh which is of Adam, concupiscence is diffused about in our members: and as that which is descended vnto vs from the parents of our bodies, doth neuer depart in this life from the flesh: so the other proceeding from the father of our spirits, is neuer excident from the intention of the mindes of his children that are perfected in him. If then we are borne of God, and elected in Christ, what equity is it that our earthly and humane generation should hurt vs more then our spirituall and heauenly is able to helpe vs? Can our carnall succession hinder the election of God, and a momentary

The Recouery

sinne be a let vnto his eternall and euerlasting purpose? Nay if by one man death entered vpon all, shall not life by one man, especially such a man as Christ, be giuen vnto all? And if in Adam wee all died, shall we not much more in Christ be made aliue? for the fault was nothing so much as the gift; for iudgement came for one sinne vnto condemnation, but grace was of many sinnes vnto iustification. Christ therefore both could remit our sinnes, in that he was God, & die, in that he was man, and by dying, deliuer vs from death; in that he was iust, and though but one, yet be sufficient vnto iustification and life for all, because both sinne and also death did enter into vs all by one. Thus all of Christ was powerfull to helpe vs, in euery thing he was profitable for vs, neither was his infirmity lesse auailable then his maiestie; for although by the power of his deitie hee removed the yoke of sinne from our neckes, yet in the infirmity of his flesh he destroyed the power of death by his death. And therefore true is that of the Apostle, the weaknesse of God is strongest vnto men; for his death hath freed vs from death, as his life did from error, and his grace from sinne. But some man may say, if Christ hath thus

deliuered vs from the power of sinne and death, what is the reason that we die dayly, and are not presently clothed with immortallitie? mary that the truth and verity of God may be fulfilled, for seeing God loueth both mercy and truth, it is necessary that man die because God hath spoken it, and yet that he rise and liue againe, because God is merciful. So that death, although it doth not perpetually raigne ouer vs, yet it remaineth for a time in vs for the truth of Gods sake; euen as sinne also, though it raigne not in our mortall bodies, yet it is not altogether abolished out of vs.

Thirdly, as death was put to death by this Lord of life, so likewise was sathan the prince of death: for as Origen testifieth there were besides the Theeues, two crucified on the Crosse of Christ. Christ himselfe visibly, with his wil, and for a time: the diuell inuisibly, against his wil, and for euer: so that now the band of death which was drawne together, by the sinful life of one, was loosed by the righteous death of another, and our malicious aduersary that neuer ment vs good is now overtaken in the effect of his malice: for by hastening the Sonne of Gods execution, he brought on all the sonnes of mens

The Recouery

redemption, and his owne confusion. *Reus dum iruens, captus dum capit, mortalem persequens, & in saluatorem incidens.* Falling whilst following, caught whilst catching, pursuing a creature, and lighting on the Sauour: so that as before he had overcome the first Adam, and in him, had held all mankinde captiue, now he is overcome himselfe of a second Adam, & by his puissance looseth the Christian kinde that were chosen out of mankinde, and now set free from the sinne of man, by this his aduersary, that was without sinne, though he were of mankinde. And is not this (blessed brethren) Tidings of great ioy, that such a Sauour is borne vnto vs, that hath subdued all those that were any whit against vs? Therefore now, O dead Adam, lift vp thy head again, take hart vnto thee, and be of a good courage, for hee is borne that hath vanquished thy enemies, Sin, Death, and the Diuel: that wil reconcile thee to thy creator, and make thee a newe creature: thou hast bin dead a great while like Lazarus, and wee may thinke with Mary, that thou stinkest, but he that could make the dry bones come together, and stand vp, is able to raise thee from the dust of death, and to set thee with the Princes of the liuing God. Thou hast layne a long time in thy goare, like the woun-

ded man of Iericho, and many haue passed by thee, but none shewed compassion on thee; but behold, here is come a good Samaritane to binde vp thy wounds, and to restore thee to thy health, despaire not. This (beloued) is the comfort of a Christian, the solace of a sinner, and the tidings of ioy that is come vnto all people: euen that there is borne vnto vs a *Sauour*. O name aboue all names, and most woorthy to be euer named; It is euen as honny vnto my mouth, and as marrowe vnto my bones; O blessed be this name of the Lord, for it turneth my water into wine, my malady into melody, my sorrowes into solace, my musing into musicke, and my sighing into singing: like oyle, it maketh me to haue a cheerefull countenance, and like bread, it strengtheneth my fainting hart: it is as sweet incense powred forth, and therefore saith Solomon, the virgins loue him. I wil not now be afraide for any terrours by night, nor for the arrowes that flie by day: for my Sauour will saue me vnder his wings, and I shall be safe vnder his fethers, his mercy and truth shall be my shield and buckler.

Many were the fauors that God shewed vnto the Israelites, in bringing them from their grieuous bondage in Egypt, to their

The Recouery

stately gouernment in Canaan, whereof Dauid seemeth very proud in that Psalme that he compiled of it. But if you consider them they will appeare nothing, in comparison of those benefits which this sweet name Sauior doth import vnto vs. First, saith Dauid, he deuided the red Sea, and led them safely through it, when their foes were drenched and ouerwhelmed in it, and in the day time he led them with a Cloud. This was their Baptisme vnder Moses as Paul saith, but if we compare it with ours, we shall finde that we haue drowned a greater enemy, even the infernall Pharao the diuill of hell, as many as are baptised in the red Sea of this our Sauiours blood. Dauid goeth farther and saith; As he led them in the day time with a cloud, so did he in the night time with a light of fire. This was, I confesse, a token of Gods great loue, to giue them such a Light; but it was nothing in comparison of that light which shineth in the darknesse of our heartes and minds, by which whosoever walketh, shal neuer see darknesse, but shal haue the Light of Life. Furthermore he saith, for the glory of the Iew he claue the rock in the wildernes and gaue them Drinke as out of the great depth. But Paule saith for the comfort of vs Gentiles. This rock is Christ, which being

clouen on the crosse by the souldiers speare,
there gushed out most plentifully that water
of Life which serueth to satisfie the thirst of
euery soule. Dauid addeth. God opened
the Doores of Heauen, and rained downe
Manna vpon them to eate, which was the
food of Angels: but that was but a figure of
this bread of life, which is come down from
Heauen ynto vs, of which whosoeuer eateth
shall liue for euer. Finally, Dauid reioyseth
that God by the hand of his seruant Ioshua,
conducted his people into Canaan, and set
them in possession of that good and pleasant
land. But that was but as dung in comparison
of our inheritance, our heavenly Canaan the
kingdome of God, of which Iosuah our Ie-
sus will crowne vs Kings for euer, if we fol-
low him as he hath commanded. Seeing
then (O happy Christians) that Dauid so
much reioyced for those temporal blessings
that God had bestowed vpon his forefa-
thers, how much more ought wee to tri-
umph in the remembrance of those spirituall
benedictions and graces which we shall bee
pertakers of for euer, by the comming of
our Sauour, wherein we seem as farre to ex-
ceede the Iewes in the fauour of GOD, as
the Iewes exceeded all other nations of the
world

The Recouery

world whatsoeuer.

Euen [Christ the Lord] It is added moreover for the increase of our comforte, that our Sauour is Christ. This word Christ is a Greeke word, and soundeth as much as **Annointed** in English. Whereas then we heare that our Sauour is Christ that is annointed, we are assured that he is come into the world by the speciall decree and appointment of God himselfe. The externall or visible Oyle that was vsed in the time of the Lawe, God ordained for the creating or appointing of three sorts of officers, *viz.* Kings, Priests, and Prophets, whereby he did signifie that by the hand of this King, he would gouerne and defend his people, in the person of this Priest, bee called vpon and worshipped, and by the mouth of this Prophet, declare his wil and pleasure vnto the people. Vnto all these Offices was our Sauour annointed, not with materiall or visible oyle, but with the oyle of gladnes wherewith Dauid Prophesied hee should be annointed aboue his fellowes. Neither beareth he these names and titles in vaine, but also hee executeth the Offices belonging thereunto: For first he hath deliuered vs, like a King, from the power of our enemies, and hath made vs free-

free-men with the Angels in heauen, yea he hath giuen vs Lawes and Statutes to obserue, which whoso keepeth, shall liue in them: blessing also them that serue him, and damning such as rebell against him. Therefore in that we heare our Sauour is annointed our King, to rule ouer vs, wee haue no little cause to reioyce, in that we may be assured, that the kingdome of darkenesse, which our aduersarie the diuell had begun to erect and stablish in vs, shall nowe bee ruinated and pluckt downe: In stead whereof Christ wil establish his heavenly kingdome, which is iustice, peace, and ioy of the holy ghost: also, that he shall bridle, with his might, and bruiſe with his rod of iron, not onely wicked and diuelish men, but also the diuel himselfe and al his Angels, which go about to hinder the increafe of his glory, or our health and saluation.

Secondarily, in that he is annointed our Priest, we haue this comfort giuen vnto vs, that we haue one that will sacrifice continually, like good Iob for his children, and make intercession for vs. The office of the Priest in the time of the Lawe was, to pray for the people, to blesse them, to sacrifice for them, to consecrate and sanctifie them according to

The Recouery

to the commandement. This was a great comfort in those dayes, vnto the afflicted consciences of distressed sinners, groaning and groueling vnder the heauy burden of their manifold transgressions, to haue a Priest to pray for them, and to reconcile them vnto the fauour of God, whom by their sinnes and iniquities they had prouoked vnto anger. Sithens then that we heare that Christ is annointed our Priest, we may assure our selues that hee is tied to the selfe same Offices; but indeed to so much more excellent then these, as he hath obtained a more excellent Priesthood. The Priest after the order of Aron, serued in the corruptible and figuratiue Tabernacle; but our Priest is taken vp into the true Tabernacle, heauen it selfe, where he sacrificeth for all the saints and seruants of God: there he maketh intercession for vs, for hee ascended thither, that he might follow all our suites faithfully and earnestly. He blesteth vs also, in that he was made a curse for vs: he sacrificeth for vs, in that he offered vp himselfe a sacrifice once for all, for the sinnes of the whole world: lastly he sanctifieth and consecrateth his Catholike church, renewing hir minde, and washing hir in the fountain of regeneration
by

By the word, that she may be holy, euen as he is holy. Seeing then he is anointed of God, to sacrifice and make intercession for vs, to blesse, consecrate, and sanctifie vs, and to reconcile vs againe into the fauour of Almighty god, that we may now without feare approach vnto him: what a ioyfull thing is this, that our Sauour is a Priest?

Lastly, in that he was annointed to bee a prophet vnto vs, we may reioyce and bee glad therein, because we shall truely vnderstand and know the will and pleasure of our God, seeing the Sonne of god himselfe, who is one with his father, to whom the eternall will and counsell of God is manifest and open, is annointed and appointed to declare it vnto vs. And thus much of the Ioy which a sinner may receiue when he vnderstandeth that his Sauour is Christ.

Thus (beloued) haue I acquainted you with the particularities of Ioy that it cure vnto vs in the message of the Angels what remaineth now? but that you should sing psalmes of praise and thanksgiving vnto god, who hath sent these ioyfull Tidings vnto vs. Seeing he hath so graciously regarded the low estate of vs his poore Creatures, as that he hath not spared his owne sonne to

The Recouery

saue vs. Vnto which sonne, if ye runne with penitent and contrite harts, though ye be neuer so heavy loaden, he will ease and refresh you. You know, that in Adam ye were all aliens from the house of God, but you heard how that in Christ ye are brought home vnto the bishop and shepheard of your soules; you did walke in darkenesse, but, Christ is come to giue you light, you haue mourned for your sinnes, but a Sauour is come to make you glad; you haue bin poore, but Christ is come with all the Treasures of the Trinity to make you rich. You haue sorrowed for being shut out of Paradise, but now Reioyce in that more then in any thing else; For as far as Adam, being in Paradise, did exceed vs in temporall blessings, so far do we out of Paradise exceed Adam in spiritall all benedictions: for though we were condemned to death for the tree of knowledge, yet Christ is come, that by the tree of his Crosse wee might haue life, and that wee might haue it more abundantly: more abundantly what is that? that abundantly we might haue more life by the Crosse of Christ, then euer we had or could haue had by the tree of life, that abundantly wee might gaine more by the obedience of Christ

Christ in his death, then euer wee lost or
 could loose, by the disobedience of Adam in
 his life: and therefore, though the sinne of
 Adam was so heinous and horrible, that it
 cast the Image of God out of Paradise, that
 it polluted all the race of mankinde, that it
 condemned the whole world, that it defaced
 the very frame of heauen it selfe; yet nowe
 considering the sequele, how not onely the
 guilt of sinne, but also the very memory of it
 is abolished by the comming of Christ: we
 may not be afraid to say with S. Gregory,
O felix culpa qua talem ac tantum meruit ha-
bere redemptorem. O happy man was Adam
 that euer he so sinned and transgressed a-
 gainst God, seeing both he and all we haue
 found such plentiful redemption, such in-
 estimable mercy, such superabundant graces,
 such felicity, such eternity, such life by one
 Sauour. Wherefore (deere Christian) what-
 soeuer thou art, feare not any more as a man
 without hope; but let thy spirit reioyce in
 God thy Sauour. Doe thy sinnes greene
 thee, and the punishment due vnto them ter-
 rifie thy conscience? Why, behold the Lamb
 of God that taketh away the sinnes of the
 whole world: art thou stung with the old
 serpent Sathan? Looke then on the brasen
 ser-

The Recouery

serpent Christ, who healeth the sting of the other: art thou hungry? Christ is borne the bread of life, of which whoso eateth shall liue for euer: art thou thirstie: behold Christ the fountaine of liuing water, of which who so drinketh shall thirst no more; but it shall be vnto him a well of water springing vp vnto eternall life: liuest thou in darknesse, behold Christ the light of the world, who onely disperfeth the cloudes of error: art thou desirous to enter into life? repaire vnto Christ, for he is the doore thereof, yea he is the way, the truth, and the life, without which way, there is no walking into heauen, without which truth, there is nothing but falsehood and error, and without which life, there is nothing but death eternall. Seeing then that such a Sauior is born vnto thee, in whom is the fulnes of al ioy, how canst thou be sorrowfull, or how canst thou feare? Shall Peter be sad, when he seeth the boults of Iron beaten off from him by an Angel, and the gates of the prison set open that he may go foorth and inioy his former freedome? Should Jonas feare a storme when he was cast vp safe on the land out of the belly of a whale? Or Sidrack Misaack and Abednago mourne, beeing deliuered by the Lord from the

the ſury of the furnace? Can Daniell but re-
ioyce being ſaued from the Lions? Or Io-
ſeph miſtruſt the goodnes of the Lord being
promoted from a ſlaine, to be Lord of all E-
gypt? We are deliuered from a darker priſon
then Peter, from a more fiery furnace then
Sdrack, from a more cruell Lion then Da-
niel, and adopted helres of a more noble
kingdome then ioſeph was, euen the king-
dome of Ieſus: how then ſhould we but re-
ioyce, being thus ſaued, and ſo highly pro-
moted? Why art thou heavy, O my ſoule, or
why art thou at any time diſquieted within
me? Lift vp thy head, plucke vp a good cou-
rage, celebrate with ioy the Natiuity of thy
Saviour, daunce now and be merry, not as
Herodias did, but as Dauid did, leape vp in
affection as high as heauen, where thy Sau-
our now ſitteth, not in the lap of his mother,
but on the right hand of his father in all glo-
ry and maiestie. Come then, my brethren, let
vs ſing vnto the Lord, let vs hartely reioyce
in the ſtrength of our Saluation. Let Iſrael
reioyce in him that made him, and let the
children of Sion be ioyfull in their King:
Praise his name in the daunce, ſing praises
vnto him with Tabret and Harpe: Yong
men and maidens, old men and children,

E

praiſe

praise the name of the Lord, sing carols
lustily vnto him with a good courage. For
why? the Lord is knowne now to haue plea-
sure in his people in that he hath receiued vs
vnto mercy, and hath sent his owne Sonne to
satisfie his Iustice, that wee might be saued.
He hath annointed him to be our King, let
vs therefore obey him: he hath ordained
him to be our Priest, let vs therefore haue re-
course vnto him: and hee hath appointed
him to be our Prophet, let vs therefore har-
ken and giue care vnto him.

O Lord God, how greatly are we indeb-
ted vnto thy maiesty, being redeemed with
so great a price, being saued so frankly and
freely. O how art thou to be loued of vs
poore creatures! how greatly art thou to be
Reuerented, honored, and glorified of vs,
which hast so exceedingly loued vs, saued
vs, sanctified and exalted vs, who exceeded
all thy creatures in Rebellion against thee.
We were vnworthy seruants, but now wee
are made free, yea now we are free indeed
in that thy sonne hath made vs free. O giue
vs thy grace to receive thy sonne being now
come into the world, that we may be recei-
ued of him in the world to come. And for
this cause sanctifie our sinfull and polluted
harts,

harts, that he may vouchſafe to enter into
 vs, and abide in vs ; for a cleane Lord muſt
 haue a cleane habitation ; That ſo beeing
 ſanctified in earthly Babilou we may bee
 thought worthy to be glorified in thy hea-
 uenly Ierusalem. Heere there is but Tidings
 of Ioy , but there we ſhall enioy the Ioy it
 ſelfe. Heere there is but newes that he came,
 but there we ſhall reape the fruites of his
 comming, when we ſhall be wedded vnto
 him in ſpirituall vnity, and raigne with him
 in the kingdome of his deity ; replenished
 with that Ioy that no man ſhall take from vs.
 Of the which we beſeech thee, O father, to
 make vs pertakers and that for the merri-
 ts of that thy ſonne and our Sauour through the
 mighty operation of the holy ghoſt . To
 which Trinity, yet one power and vnparted
 maiesty, wee aſcribe all honor and glory,
 praife and thankſgiuing, both
 now and euer. A-
 men.

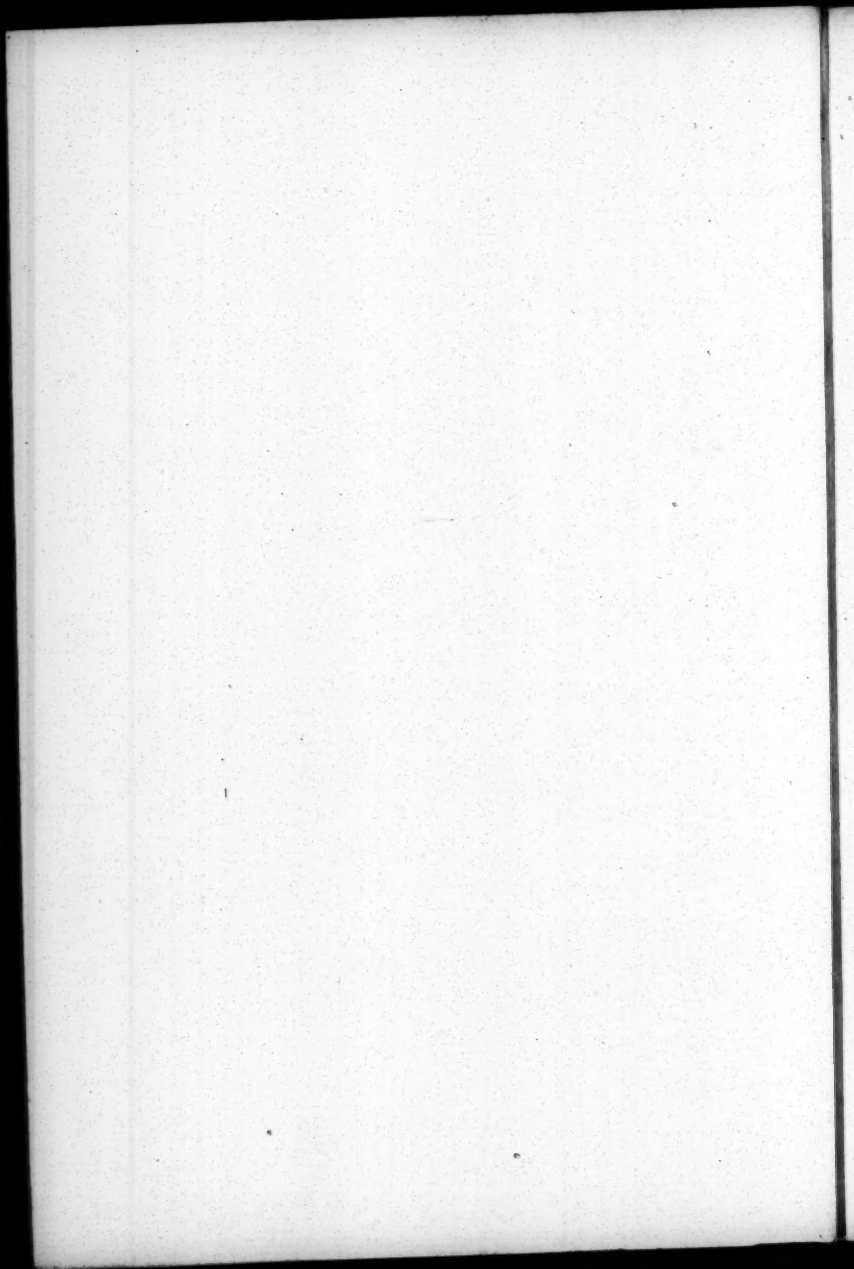
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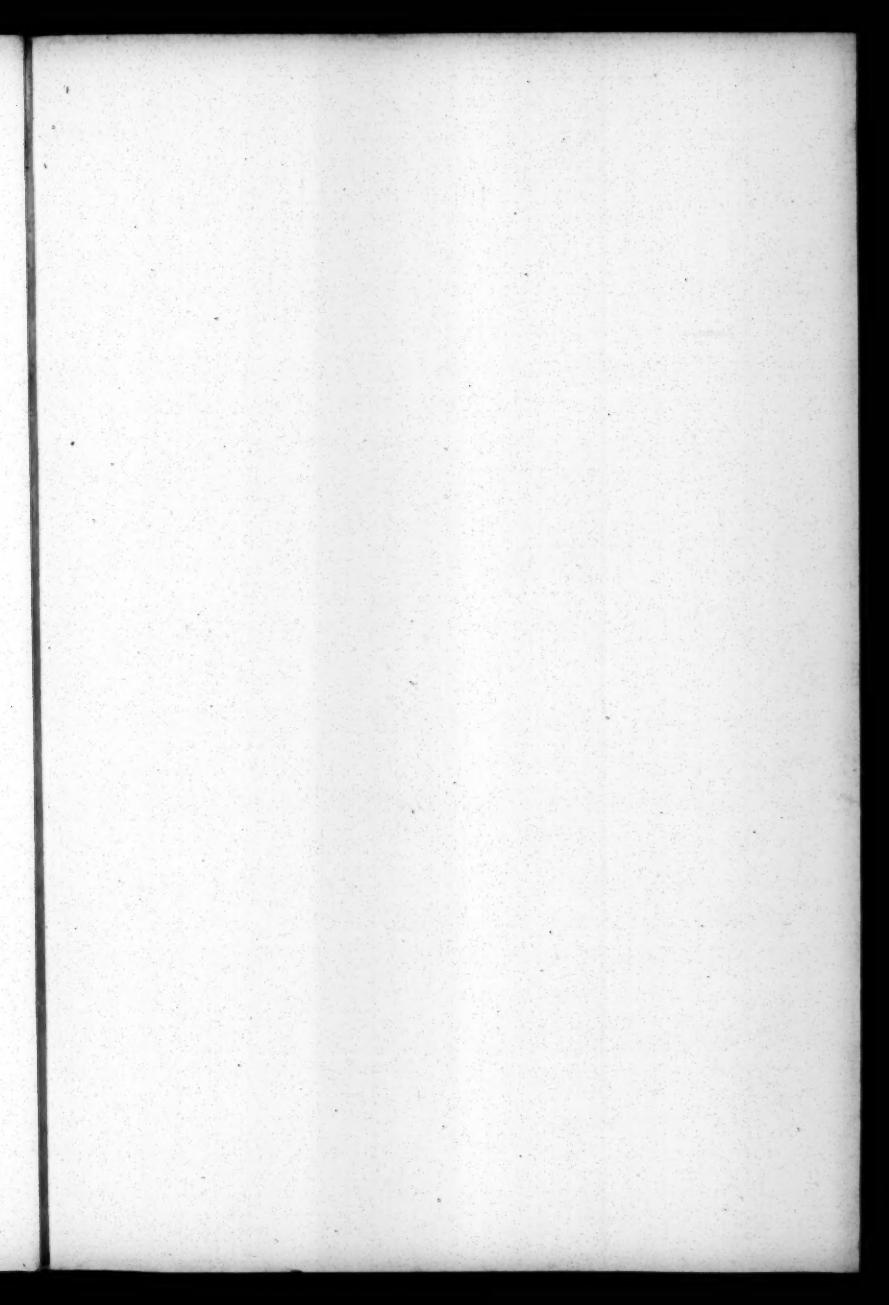
And now, O Lord, I beseech thee, by thy
 precious blood, which thou hast shed for
 us, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,
 and to keep us from all sin, that we may
 ever remain in thy love and grace, to the
 glory of thy Father, who is the Father of
 all grace, Amen.

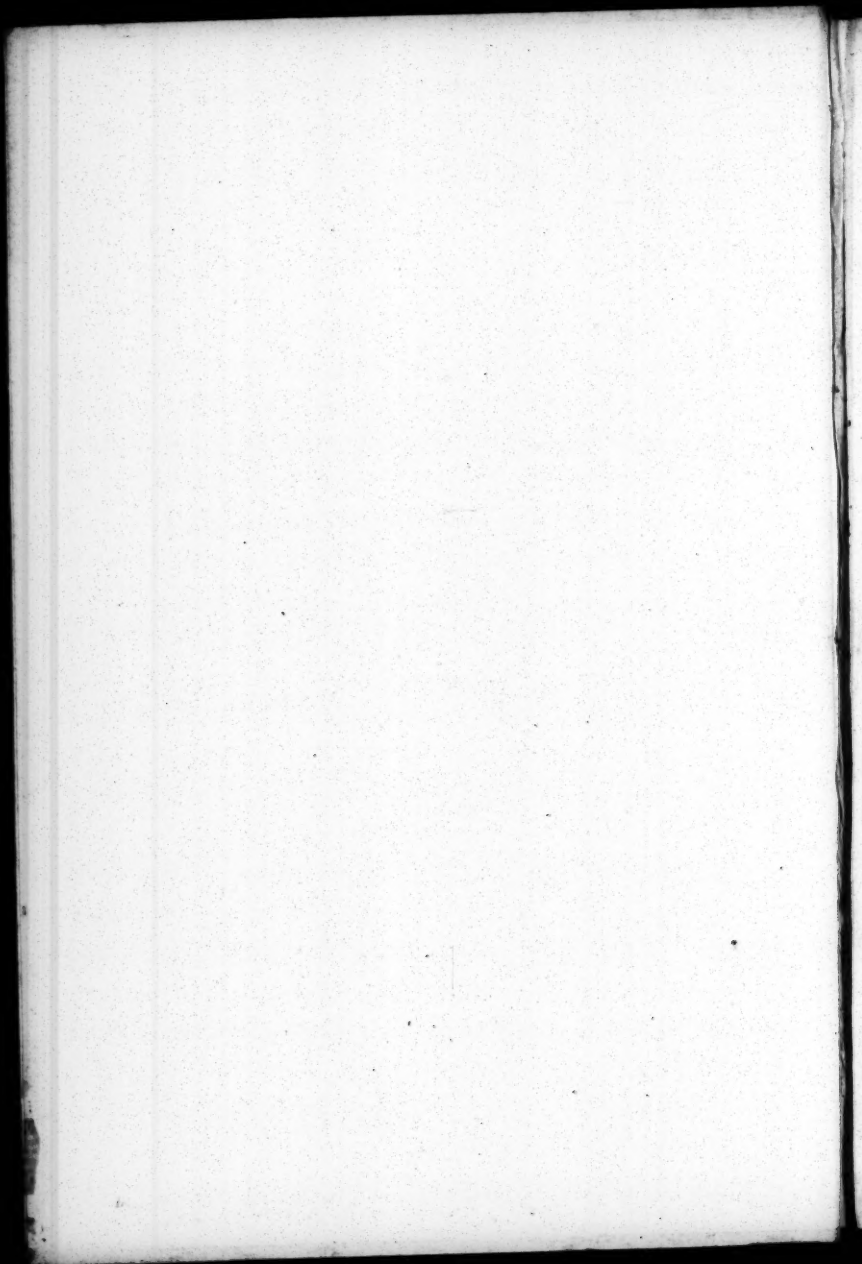


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